

CHRISTS

GRACIOUS INTENTIONS

OF

Peace and Mercy towards sinners,
freely tendred.

TOGETHER

With the necessity of observing the season,
and accepting the offer of *Peace* and
Reconciliation, while it may be attained.

Evidenced in a Sermon at *St. Pauls, London.*

Martii 3. 1661.

From *Luke 19. verse 41, 42.*

By *Rich. Parr. D. D. Pastor of*
Camerwell.

Heb. 2. 3. How shall we escape, if we neglect so great
Salvation!

1 Cor. 6. 2. Behold, now is the accepted time, Behold, now
is the day of Salvation.

Qui voluntatem Dei speraverunt invitantes,
Voluntatem Dei sentiente vindicantes. Aug.

London, Printed for Nathanael Brooks, and are
to be sold at his Shop, at the Sign of the Angel
in Corn-Hill, 1661.

C H R I S T

GRADUATES INTENTION

OF

Power and Authority towards

the

GOVERNMENT

of the

Church of England

and the

State of England

in the

Year 1704

By

James

London

Printed

at

the

Print

of

the



R
I

I pr
the



TO THE
READER.

I Have no Design in
publishing this Ser-
mon, but Thy good
that readeſt it. When
I preached at Saint Pauls,
the Text put me in mind
A 2 of

To the Reader.

of Jerusalem; and the
sad aspect it had on Lon-
don, made me the more
earnest and particular in
the application. It had
ben the Lot (as all pub-
lique Discourses have) to
be censured as mens hu-
mours and apprehensions
are, which are various; and
they judge of things for
the most part as they af-
fect: But with some among
those many present then,
this Sermon had successe
and acceptance. To the
Truths in the Doctrines;
some

To the Reader.

some bore Testimony, and others were convinced; And I am sure it concerned every one, as well as any one.

And now, Reader, you see I make the Dedication to none but thee, because none but he that will vouchsafe the serious perusal, is capable of it. I beg not Patronage from any body; but if the Truths therein, and the Cause in hand, and honest Intentions cannot secure it, and justify its

A 3 walk

To the Reader.

walk abroad, let it fall;
and if it fall into thy hand,
heart, and practice, it cannot be lost.

The Designe of this
Sermon was, at preaching,
and now is in publishing,
To let every one know as
well as London,

1. How gracious the
Lord Jesus is toward poor
sinners, And how ill he
takes it, to be slighted in
his offers of grace, and
Termes of peace and re-
conciliation, when sinners
most need it ----- And

2. To

To the Reader.

2. To give warning
from the Lord, That
you let not slip your sea-
son and day of grace,
and saving mercy, while
you may have it; Alas,
how ill must it go with that
soul, when the day is lost
as to it, and the merci-
full offer withdrawn! And
truly, were it not a mat-
ter of the highest concern-
ment in the whole world,
that herein is treated
of; I would not have
let it gone beyond that
Numerous Congregation,
A 4 where

To the Reader.

where 'twas preached.

But considering that deliberate Reading, and serious Consideration may much improve the use more then hasty Preaching; I am at length prevailed withall by some devout soules importunity, to let it come forth without any more or lesse than what was delivered, except what it got or lost in the presse, which I must not own.

And now if the opening and applying these two Doctrines,

To the Reader.

doctrines may be acceptable to the Reader:

The first manifesting Christs real, free, and most gracious intentions toward sinners, in designing their conversion and eternall salvation, most heartily, most passionately, most powerfully, and fully, on his part.

This is clearely proved: And then the second which evidenceth the necessity of improving the mercy in due time, by accep-

To the Reader.

accepting the offer, and complying with Christs demands on his own terms, in the day of grace, as it is the greatest concernment in the world to every one that makes any reckoning, whether he be saved or damned eternally.

If those Two Points which are here discussed, will draw the Reader on to the perusall with an honest heart, and that he thinks them of any moment, let him read on,

To the Reader.

on , and consider ; If
not , then lay the Sermon
by , and despise thy mer-
cies , lose thy day , cast
away thy soul , lye down in
sorrow , and lament thy ir-
reparable and unrecovera-
ble losse. But if Thou
hast a mind to be happy
indeed , and saved eter-
nally ; Then , whether
thou read any more of
this or not , let me
prevaile with thee , as
thou valuest thy eternall
State , delay no long-
er ; put not off again
any

To the Reader.

any more the intreaties
of Christ; and the offers
made thee in the Gospel,
and brought to thee in the
name of the Lord Jesus,
by them who are intrusted
with the conditions of Re-
conciliation, and are treat-
ing with you in the Mi-
nistry to this end, and
calling upon you to accept
in time, what may do you
good for ever; And doe
not (as, doe not) put
Christ and his Mini-
sters to say of thee, and
mourn over thee, with
an

To the Reader.

an O that thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace ! But now they are hid from thine eyes.

Know therefore thy day, embrace Grace while tendered ; make up thy peace with God while it may be made, lay in for thy interest by Christ, lay up treasure in Heaven ; Let not Christ go, force him not away from thy Soul, as the Jewes did from their City,

To the Reader.

City, but close with him,
cleave to him stedfastly; take
him for thy Saviour, and
for thy Lord, leave him
not; and he will never
leave thee comfortlesse; let
thy sinnes go, cast them
all away this day, let not
one day passe away again
without thy hearty closing
with Christ; let him rule in
thee, and over thee; im-
prove the day of visitati-
on, and be happy; re-
solve upon a godly life,
make Religion thy chiefest
care, and the glory of
God

To the Reader.

God and his free grace, in
the salvation of thy preci-
ous soul, thy aime and
ultimate end; and lay to
heart the things belonging
to thy peace: Read the
rest, and consider all,
and God blesse it to thee.

Thy friend and Servant,
in the faith of Jesus.

R. P.

And his free grace, in
the redemption of the
soul, the same and
to the same end, and to
the things belonging
to the same: For the
sake of which, consider
that God calleth it to thee.

Thy friend and servant
in the faith of Jesus.

R. P.



And

b

Say

v

d

u

a

T

Hee

day

depa

gain

Tex

atte

it,

hear



Luk. 19. 41, 42.

And when he was come neer, he beheld the City, and wept over it.

Saying, If thou had'st known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace! But now, they are hid from thine eyes.

THis Scripture readd is a narrative, about our blessed Lord Christ: both of what Hee *did*, and what Hee *said*, in the day of his flesh, a little before his departure hence to his Glory again. And I hope the reading of the Text hath already prepared your attention; and, may the opening of it, and Application, affect your hearts!

The story is Sad in the Letter, weeping and lamentation; but more Dolefull in the Event. It ends with a deplorable reflexion of misery upon the *Jews*, for refusing their mercy, together with their King and Saviour. Christ meant them all good, but they would not have it; they would have none of his good things.

Christ wept over them, and sought them, with tears: they cared not, they regarded not. He intreated them, again and again; but no Importunity, nor love, nor mercy, could win them, all is cast away upon them. They refused and by refusing, grieved the heart of Christ, and undid themselves for ever; they lost their day, and lost their peace, and lost their souls. God had sent unto them, his Servants the Prophets, formerly to treat with them about the things of their Peace and Eternall happiness, things of the greatest concernment imaginable; but all is one to them, they were taken up with other imployments:

ployments: And because the servants of the high God, were so Importunate, these were violent; they did not only slight the message, but they beat the Prophets, and abused them, and killed them. 'Tis often the lot of those who come in the name of the Lord, on Heavenly Errands; to be most slighted, and most abused: so then; so now.

Now Christ himself appears, the Saviour of the World, in Person, from the bosome of Glory; and Hee comes with tenders of the richest mercies, and dearest love that ever was heard of; draws neer, bespeaks their acceptance: but alas, the saddest story that ever was told, Hee, the King of Glory, is rejected too; His offers slighted, as wel as his servants: The *Jews* will be *Jews* still, they'l have none of Christ neither; no peace from him, no redemption nor reconciliation by him; We will not (say they) have this man to reign over us, *Vers. 14.* Poor wretches! Did you know whom, did you know what yee refused?

fused? You will not have Christ, and with him Grace and Salvation: Why, you shall not then. Heaven shall not be forced upon you against your wills; remember that I would, but you would not: Here is the price of your Redemption, and Salvation brought home, and laid at your doors freely and fully; but if you will not open, and stretch forth your hand to lay hold on it, while 'tis here at hand, some others will hereafter be glad of what you refuse; you shall go without it: and when I am gone, and the door of mercy and grace is shut against you, you may knock but in vain. You will then wish (Oh) *that we could but see one of the daies of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it:* For, now they are hid from thine eyes.

Luk. 17.
22.

This is the cutting Sentence, this is the saddest part of the story: for the hardness of their hearts Christ was grieved, knowing well enough, what would come of it. And when he saw them so indeed, Hee wept
and

and said: *If thou had'st known, even thou, in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace; but now they are hid.*

Now, though there be a winning oratory in every accent of this Text, in every motion, and in every expression, and Oh, how powerfull was it, and lively when Christ himself acted, and said it; who did, as never man did; and spake, as never man spake; Yet because these things were done, and spoken at a distance from us, a good while agoe in the Letter of the Text: I shall let that alone, and consider it in the mystery of this Text, and so much as belongs to us, I shall apply.

These outward actions of Christs Body, and words of his mouth, are but so many expressions, and notices, by which men might perceive the heart of Christ towards sinners; all, as well as those; us, as well as them: for Christ hath the same heart still in Heaven, that he had on Earth; He is brim-full of love,

Dum narrat Scripturæ gestum prodit Mysteriū, &c.

pitty, and compassion; and men on earth, have the same disposition still as they had, alwaies sinning, alwaies resisting; and except the Lord prevail with us by his Word and Spirit, in the day of his mercy, we shall miss our happiness as they did theirs.

Do not say or think, that then was then, and now is now; as though there were, and are, severall Dispensations and severall Administrations, touching the means and manner of Conversion. No, Christ was then, and Christ is now; then in the flesh, now in the Spirit, and Ministry; Christ spake to them himself: He speaks to you, by us: See 2 Cor. 5. 20. *Now then we are Ambassadors for Christ: as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christs stead, be ye reconciled unto God:* Which is the very same thing the Text imports; that, as Christ did treat with them about their Reconciliation and Salvation: So we with you, in his Name, beseech and intreat you, in this your day,

day, to lay to heart, to know the things of your peace; And if you do not hear us and yeild, but do as they did, Slight, Resist, and Disobey: it will be your sad case as it was theirs; Mercy will be hid from your eyes, and Salvation from your souls, as much as if Christ himself were now speaking to you, and weeping over you, and bleeding before your eyes, *Luk. 10. 16. He that heareth you heareth me, he that despiseth you despiseth me.*

By this time (Sirs) you easily perceive what the design of your Monitor is this day with you, from this deportment, and this saying of our Saviour recorded in the Text.

'Tis to let you know (that you may in time consider) how gracious the Lord Jesus is toward sinners; and how ill he takes it, if this mercy be despised when offered.

And to give you warning from the Lord, that you let not slip the opportunity, for then it must go ill with your souls, you will be the

1.

2.

loofers: Christ may loose the Honor of your Conversion, but you will loose the happiness of Reconciliation and Salvation.

The business we have in hand is of highest concernment; life and death are laid before us this day; Oh that you would in this your day consider the things which belong unto your peace, before they be hid from your eyes.

I have two Doctrines ready from this Text, to serve up this design unto you.

1. The first, to evidence Christs reall, and gracious intentions towards sinners.

2. The second, to evidence the Necessity of Improving the mercy in due time, by accepting the offer, and complying with Christs demands, on the day of grace, as it is the greatest concernment in the world to us.

Then next, and what we have else to do, is, to comply with grace and mercy, and reduce all to practice this very day, without any more,

more delay or Procrastination, and this will be urged in the Application.

And that we may with lesse difficulty believe th truths propounded, and without hesitation consent, and imbrace the mercy offered, Let us together review the expressions in the text, and then we may perceive the mind and meaning of our blessed Lord, *by what he hath done*, and *by what he hath said*; to evidence to us what *desire* he hath that poor sinners should partake of that he graciously offereth, and so make peace, and so make happy.

And while we descant upon the words, think with your selves they are as much to you, as any others; *Jerusalem* the City then, *London* now, as great, as rich, as sinfull, as wicked; Christ in person there, in Spirit here; Christ was near to them, as near to us; he beheld that City, and beholds this; he sought them, and intreated them; and he seeks us, and beseecheth us; They had an opportunity to be happy,

happy, so have we. And surely if there can be any thing, or way to expresse an infinite love, a tender care, a most hearty longing desire of the salvation of sinners, it is here implied.

He drew near, and beheld and wept.

He] the Lord of life, full of grace, and full of pity, and full of power, to help poor sinners to pardon, to redeem, to sanctifie to save.

Near] he was ready for it, they come not out to him; he comes up to them, brings salvation to their door; 'twas Christs love, and sinners misery that brought him so near.

Beheld] looked wistly on the City, he saw the stately structures, the rich ornaments, the soft rayments, the numerous multitudes, their outward flourish and gaiety of Religious professions; and withall, he saw their manners too, and their inside *ἐν ὁρατῷ* as in a mirror; what they had been, what they were then for frame of Spirit, and what would come to passe, if

not

not prevented in time?

Wept] *κλαυεν*, he was broken with grief; he shed tears, he wept:

Quest. But why did Christ sorrow, and grieve, and weep.

Ans. Not that the City was so richly laden with outward blessings, Christ grudged not their plenty, nor their peace; if they would have been good, they might have been great, and rich, without offence: but he was grieved for them, that they were so poor, so blind, so naked in spirituall things; they had prosperous bodies, but starved soules: very politique, and very proud; but very fools and unwise about the *numm* *necessarium*. He shed his teares over them, because they shed none for themselves; they remembered not their past sins, nor heeded their present opportunity, nor foresaw, nor believed their future miseries; they laid none of these things to heart, but wilfully refused their recovery, they cared not for all these things, nor for Reconciliation,

ciliation, nor pardon, nor deliverance, nor Christ, nor grace; they trusted in their own strength, riches, wisdom, priviledges, with the form of godlinesse; but as for reconciliation by Christ, inward holinesse, conversion, and the power of christianity, these things they looked not after. Hence it was that Christ wept, for the hardnesse of their hearts, and inconsideratenesse: *Alas!* how too too like those, are the men of this present world after all the care and paines with them: so they may *be*, and so they may *have* what they would for outwards, what care they? How little are they concerned, for soul-saving things? and is not this for a lamentation and weeping?

Again, Christ beheld the City and wept over it.

Christ had them in present *view*, together with their present prosperity, their *intolerable blindness*, *hardnesse*, *unbelief*, and *stupendious supine neglect* of the means of their recovery,

recovery, on this very day which was their last day of grace: And this was matter of sadnesse.

Secondly, And he had in *prospect* their future ruine and destruction, and this drew tears from the Lord of life; he would, but they would not; he would have given them grace and pardon, and prevented their ruine, but they would not; he would have healed and saved them from that day, but they would not. Hence it is that Christ wept, both for their present hardnesse, and future destruction.

Alas! Christ wept not so much for the destruction and downfall of those stately Buildings; he could have raised such ones and better, God could quickly have made them as rich again, though they had lost all by fire, and pillage: but alas, alas they refused and rejected such a Lord and Saviour, such grace and rich salvation, which God had not the like to give them again; they might have lived as happily any where

where else, where Christ and salvation were to be had; but where could they find another Saviour, and another such day, when these were finally lost?

Wept over it, saying] His love to them would not let him depart so, but pleads again with them; he'll try again whether his language can yet prevaile, seeing his tears cannot: for this once he bespeaks them pathetically; why poor soules, you are now upon the point of making or marring, you may be happy this day, and for ever after; oh how happy may you be, and blessed!

And, if you mark it, his speech is like that of a most tender parent, beholding a beloved child wounded to death by his own hand, and wallowing in his blood, and would not be helped, but rejects the means of recovery; grief gives not passage to words; oh how doth Christ grieve over these wilfull miserable sinners, and weeping saith, scarce can he speak for sorrow,
bemoanes,

bemoanes them perishing, with broken words, interrupted with sighs and groans.

Hadst thou but known, even thou]
 So bad as thou hast been, yet (even thou) after all thy unkindnesse to me, thy contempt, thy stubbornnesse, thy sin, and thy folly, thy insolent carriage toward my Ministers and messengers; yet after all this thy wickedesse, and abuse of my patience, and long-sufferance. O yet, yet, after all, if thou hast in this thy day laid all these things to heart, and considered who it is that now weeps over thee, that now speaks to thee; who it is, and what, this day, is freely offered thee; if thou wouldst lay to heart and imbrace yet the things belonging to thy peace, while I am now speaking in this last hour of this thy day, this is thy day (*Hic dies est tuus*) wherein yet thou mayest lay the foundation of happinesse, and partake of those things which are matters of the highest concernment, ten thousand

and times more worth then all the pleasures, the honours, the riches of this world, put all together.

AGs 17.31

And if thou come in before this day be closed up with night, ere this Sun be set upon thee, and this light withdrawn from thine eyes; O happy mayst thou be : But if thou wilt not, in this thy day accept of thy recovery, but put it off and refuse it still as thou hast done, O then, another day will come (*non tuus*) not thine for mercy, but a day of vengeance, Gods day of punishment, wherein thou shalt pay most dearly for all thy folly; a long day of Eternity, of Lamentation, of mourning, of anguish and torment, without remedy, for that thou hast lost thy day, and that mercy intended, and most seriously offered to thee.

So much for explanation of so much of this text, which we are sure belongs unto us. Pray God, the latter clause, that killing parting blow, which doom'd that people

ple
But
eyes
her
tha
who
not
from
com
ly a
them
F
fed
peop
much
them
much
when
T
is mo
ved
savin
accep
Th
soule
really
versio
and a

ple to their deserved losse, —
But now are they hid from thine
 eyes, may never passe on any soul
 here present. Whose ears can hear
 that sentence without Tingling;
 whose heart can consider this and
 not tremble? *But now are they hid*
from thine eyes. This was long a
 coming on them, but it came sure-
 ly at last; mercy removed from
 them, misery came upon them.

From this carriage of our blef-
 sed Lord Jesus toward those sinful
 people, wherein he expressed so
 much care, so much love toward
 them while recoverable, and so
 much pity and commiseration,
 when lost and undone;

This first OBSERVATION
 is most evident, and shall be resol-
 ved into this infallible doctrine of
 saving truth, most certain and most
 acceptable,

That God, who is the lover of
soules, and the giver of grace, doth
really, in and by Christ, wish the con-
version and salvation of sinful men;
and doth not design, nor delight in
 C *their*

their sinning nor destruction.

This truth is a genuine deduction from the text, and needs no further proof, then its own Evidence, 'tis as certain as good, and as true as the goodnesse, faithfulness, and gracious nature of God can make it; and that is, Eternally true; no man need doubt of this, who will believe any thing worthy of God.

Yet for further Evidence, that no poor soul among you, may retain any hard or unkind thoughts of God, or reserve your sins, and neglect your endeavours upon any suspicion of an Invincible necessity, of continuing in a state of sinning by a secret decree, Inferring an inevitable obligation to Sinne and Damnation, but rather conclude, not against the holy and gracious God, but your selves; that if you continue in your Rebellion, and Sin, and be at last cast into hell; that 'tis long of your selves, your own wilfulness doth procure it. Because you refuse the grace offered,

ed, and to obey when called, and denied subjection unto the Lord Jesus, and resisted the motions of Gods Spirit, and despised admonition, and slighted the means God hath appointed for thy Instruction, Conviction, and Conversion: Hence conclude, a sinners destruction is from Himself, God disclaims it; he is full of mercy, and he is ready to shew his good will, to pardon poor sinners when penitent; and to receive them when they come, and to go forth to meet the vilest prodigal at the first step homeward.

See how God hath declared himself this way, so plainly, and so freely, and so fully to guard this truth in the doctrine from the least Imputation; and to open a Door of hope for poor sinking despondent penitents, to relieve them, and encourage them, in their returning to him homeward; *Ezek. 33. 11.* say unto them, *As I live saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and lives*
 C 2 turn

turn ye, turn ye from your euill wayes, why will ye dye? and if God doth not mean in good earnest, and design the conversion and saluation of poor sinners.

Matth. 23.
37.

What mean those so often and serious invitations, *Matth. 11. 28.* why doth Ch r. st say, *he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out,* *John 6. 37.* and why doth he upbraid them, *Ye will not come to me that ye might have life;* *Joh. 5. 40.* and *Jerusalem,* *How often would I have gathered you,* and *Isai 1. 2, 3.* why doth he wish sinners had harkned to his voyce, *Psal. 81. 13, 14.* If God did not desire it, why doth he lay such strict commands upon pain of his high displeasure; To believe and Repent, and turn that they may live?

Jo. 3. 16,
17.

What means Gods pleading and arguing with sinners, but to convince them? What was the end of Christs undertaking for the world, but that by him men might be saved? *he tasted death for every man,* *Heb. 2. 9.* and to convince all men throughly

throughly of Gods good will and pleasure, and that there is no dissimulation in the Lord (as touching this matter. He hath converted and saved some of every nation, of every sort, of every degree; as great sinners, as was; to shew that he excludes none from mercy, that come unto Christ and believe, and turn from sinning to holy living.

And consider how the Lord fits all means and useth all expressions to effect what he really intends; trying with their hearts, informing their mindes, inclining their wills, stirring up their affections, to reform their lives, that they may be saved. And if God did not in good earnest intend that men should be left without excuse; why did he send his Son into the world; but to save sinners, to call them to repentance, and to save them that were lost; and his Spirit to raise those fallen; and his word to guide unto Salvation? why doth he continue the Means? why doth he send forth his

Ministers, and servants, to Invite to the supper of the Lamb? why doth he furnish them with severall gifts, and put such arguments into their mouthes, to convince and perswade, and such zeal and fervency into their Prayers, and power and life into their Sermons, and Indefatigablenesse into their studies, and Labours, and such Courage into their Spirits; that no reproaches, nor menaces, nor denials, makes them give out? Line upon Line, Sermon on Sermon; and though they often times see little successe in all their labours and pains with sinners, yet again and again cast their net, and fow their good seed; doth not all this shew that God would lose none of your precious souls, but that you should all come to the knowledge of the truth, that you might be saved.

Why doth he in his gracious providence open the doores of the Sanctuary, for all comers, and send labourers into his harvest, and gives us dayes of meeting, to con-

sult

sult with God, and treat about
 the great affairs of our soules, and
 here to woo us with the cords of
 a man, the bands of love, if he did
 not love us? what need all this adoe
 to prevaile with men, even by dis-
 pensations so suitable to Rationall
 soules, were it not that God doth
 delight in, and desire the conver-
 sion of poor sinners, and would not
 have us misse our Day of accepta-
 tion with the Lord?

Again, can you tell what is the
 meaning of all those secret convic-
 tions and touches of conscience,
 all those crosses and afflictions, and
 a thousand divine Arts God useth,
 but that God doth leave no way
 untryed, to weane and to tame
 worldlings, and refractory sinners,
 to bring them home? what could I
 have done for my vine-yard, *Isa.*
 5. So that 'tis beyond all dispute,
 that God is serious and willing,
 and that he is not the cause of
 any mans sin or perdition? or doth
 he desire it, either through want
 of love, pity, or supply of grace,

or that any secret Decree doth put any barre to mans Conversion primarily, and of absolute Determination, untill all means and mercies be contemned, and all motions and touches of heart be stifled and resisted: surely if God meant to damn men within the call and line of the Gospel, upon the account meerly of absolute Dominion, he need not, he would not, deal as he doth in this gracious manner; no, God hath determined in his word, that if sinners will stand out, and go on in a way of contradiction to his Lawes and will; they shall fall upon the edge, and be cut asunder with their own weapon, and perish by their own iniquity: and after all, God will be justified in their destruction: and sinners that will not lay to heart the things of their peace, in the day wherein God is stretching out his hands in mercy, then the in day of Retribution, and account, they shall not have one word to say; either by way of excuse for themselves,

OR

or blame on God; they shall not be able to say they would, but God would not; but this they shall be forc't to confesse; God would, Christ would, his Ministers would, but alas, I would not.

Quest. And hence you have an answer ready to that question, How comes it to passe (if God be so desirous of mans conversion, and salvation) that so many are dammed?

'Tis easily resolved, that is, 'tis long of themselves they do not come unto Christ, *they will not come to us*, Jo. 5. 40. they did not, they do not, they will not believe, repent, and obey the Gospel in time; they either refuse the offer, lose their day, or perform not the conditions in the Covenant of mercy and grace, indispensibly required to salvation; the means are comprehended, and conditions on mans part established by Gods will, as the end is. If sinners will decline the way, or go contrary to the rule, they may not in reason expect the end.

Quest.

Ans.

Men

and Men would be saved by grace, but men will not be ruled by grace; 17. 2. 11, 12. there is the summe of all. Gods free grace, and mans whole duty must go together.

'Tis true; works perfect, in-
defective, and intire (as under
the first demands of God) are
not now our conditions; here is
our cannot Indeed: but what the
Gospel requires and grace effects,
this is your Condition. And if we
believe not, repent not effectually,
and live not a sanctified life, holy,
just, sober, chaste, charitable, we
act against Gods will, and forfeit
our interest in Christs purchase
and redemption: and wilfully and
foolishly throw away our souls,
and so perish eternally; for God
hath said, *Ezek. 18. 21. But if the
wicked will turn from all his sins
that he hath committed, and keep all
my statutes, he shall surely live; he
shall not dye; he shall save his soul
aloud: because he considereth,
Ver. 30. Repent, and turn: your
selves; so iniquity shall not be your*
ruine,

Ezek. 18.
21. 30. 31.

ruine, for ver. 32. *I have no pleasure in the death of him that Dieth*, that is damned, *sarth the Lord God, wherefore turn ye and live.*

There is a quaint distinction found out by some body, I cannot well tell any use there is of it, unless it be to reconcile some mens Doctrines and their Applications, while they tell them in *Thess* one thing, and in *Hypothese* another, and if the distinction had never been, it had never been wanted, (tis this) That according to Gods declared will, God would have sinners come to repentance, and faith, and holiness, and be saved: but he hath a secret will, by which he would not have them either do so, or be saved. Though he speaks sinners fairly, and presseth them earnestly, yet he wills no such matter, but their damnation; and decreed this without respect to sin, ere the men had sinned.

Alas, what a fine representation doth this make of the true God? How much is God and man behold-

ing

ing to this distinction; Why & what is it lesse then to render the glorious God so to be, as no honest fair dealing man would be accounted (i. e.) to speak one thing and mean another, to shew much love, yet intend much hatred. No certainly, God means what he speaks, and if any man perish, (as thousands do) is not because they were forc't to damnation, but because they chose it; that is, they will not be saved in Gods own way; and God hath decreed, (for he hath declared) that no man shall be saved, but he that believeth in his Son, and obeyeth him in his heart and life, *Jo. 3. ult. Mark 16. 16.* And methinks this plain dealing with men, answers best the glory of Gods power and justice, grace and mercy; And if any will say that the glory of Gods justice is seen in the damnation of sinners, I say so too, and of that glory God will have a great deal: for there are but a few will be saved, and what will become of the rest then?

*1 Jo. 5. 11.
Mark 16.
16.*

Well

Well let alone, let secret things belong to God, 'tis his Prerogative to reserve that to Himself, which we are not fit to know: but those things that are revealed belong to us, and this that we speak of is such; and then we may safely conclude what we have in the doctrine delivered.

Deut. 29.

But would you know the REASONS why God is so abundantly gracious to poor sinners, that deserve no such things from him?

The Reason of this is founded in Gods own nature and will, the foundation is in Himself, the motive from himself, his free and liberal grace; we are only the subjects of misery, and objects of pity, no worth or comeliness in us, that wallow in our blood and filth: he will shew himself first this way in mercy, because he will shew mercy; he is good to all, *his mercy is over all his works*; and you may spell the reason from the Text-Letters of his name, *Exod 34. 6. The Lord, the Lord God, mercifull and gracious,*

Reason.

Ezek: 16.
Ps 145. 8, 9

gracious; long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin.

And now, who shall ask again, why doth God do thus? seeing God is not bound to give a reason of his doings? is it not enough for us poor worthless dust, that God hath revealed himself to be thus?

2. Reas.

Eph. 3. 11,
12.
2 Tim. 1. 15
Heb. 1. 9.
Jo. 3. 16.

Yet secondly, you shall find the fountain of this stream of love, pity, and mercy in Christ Jesus, Eph. 3. 11, 12 according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord, and 2 Tim. 1. 9, 10 according to his own purpose, and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; and his coming into the world was to execute this purpose, 1 Tim. 2. 15. he tasted death for every man, Heb. 2. 9. God so loved the world, that he sent his own Son into the world, that whosoever believeth on him, should not perish, but have everlasting life, Jo. 3. 16.

Christ

Christ the foundation of this love and grace, and the executioner of this purpose and decree; For the Sonne of man is come to save that which was lost; that is, Mankind: *Matth. 18. 11.* And he is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance, *2 Pet. 3. 9.* this is reason enough, aske no farther.

Matth. 18. 11.

2 Pet. 3. 9.

So that now, Sirs, you have the first point proved, make no question of it, but believe it assuredly, and give God the praise of his free grace, and admire the greatness of his goodnesse toward the children of men. And consider withall, the great patience, and long-sufferance, and forbearance of our gracious God, flowing from this, his rich goodnesse to these poor sinner in Christ, as the Emanations from that fountain: which on purpose is lengthened out unto thee, to lead to Repentance, and Reformation, as a testimony of that reality in Gods heart, that he will reb

Rom 12. 4.

our

our salvation, and not our destruction.

Therefore, sinners, oh, let not this grace and favour be abused, despise it not; accept it with all readinesse, put not off the intreaties of the Lord, do not say of grace, reconciliation, reformation; go for this time and come again, lest you never hear more of it; but it be hid quite from your eyes: but while a prize is put into your hand, put your heart to it, why should you be fools?

And this brings us to a second **OBSERVATION.**

Now in the next place, as this doctrine from the Text hath opened a door of hope to poor sinners, upon their thoughts of returning to God, so as the Smoaking flax may not be quenched, nor the bruised reed be quite broken; but may receive flame and strength from the breath of mercy, and power of God;

So I must shut the door of presumption upon loose and careless

lesse livers, for such there are, that make no other use of Gods grace and favour, but to abuse it, by making it serve their continuance in sin, (i. e.) No man may rest in Gods mercy in a way of sinning, no more then despaire in a way of repenting.

That men may neither depend on their free-will to be saved when they please, as though they would command grace at pleasure, or be saved on their own account: and that men may not dare to put off or delay their opportunities, but take their day, and in it lay to heart the things which belong unto their peace, before it be hid from their eyes, for when once he day is gone, and that grace tendred to thee, is retired to the bosome of Christ; it will be too late, too late. Therefore this Text gives us a doctrine of Caution, and Premunition, thus.

That if sinners would be partakers of the mercy so really intended, and things which belong unto their

2.

2. Doct.

peace mercifully offered, they must in due time lay to heart in the day of visitation, imbrace the offers, close with Christ, Repent and turn from their sins, and serve and love the Lord Jesus heartily, or else they shall have none of it; you lose your day, you lose your mercy, you lose your soules.

Hadst thou known in this thy day, &c. but now——

They are hid from thine eyes.——

This Item and Caution in the Text, is as clear and evident as the other; Christ wept for the hardnesse of their hearts, while recoverable, and our Lord bemoaned them for their misery, when past recovery; they had their day once, and lost that day, and 'twas hid from their eyes for ever after.

God hath, and doth really intend mercy, and as seriously doth he tender it some time or other, and to all without exception; if sinners had eyes to see it, and hearts to consider it when offered: but God hath set boundaries and limits

to

to the time, so long will I wait
 to be gracious; *All the day long*
have I stretched out my hands
to a gain-saying people: God will
 visit thy soul; man must wait and
 observe; our times are in Gods
 hand, we have not the command
 of our time nor grace; God dispo-
 ses of both: when therefore it is
 called, Thy day, it is meant of a cer-
 tain time, which God hath ap-
 pointed thee, to come in and re-
 ceive the mercy, and to improve
 the talent; but no man must hence
 peremptorily conclude, that he
 may chuse his time when he plea-
 seth, and set his day, and limit
 God to such periods of his life.
 though he were sure to live so
 long; alas, if men could command
 grace and salvation when they
 please, what fine doings would
 there be in the world? how would
 sinners make God serve with their
 sins, and wait on them even to
 their death-bed, and then to serve
 their turn at last with salvation,
per saltum? Therefore God hath

given us a day to manifest his goodnesse and love, and hath limited this to *Hic* and *Nunc*, to shew his wisdom and prerogative. God limits us, we must not limit him; if while God gives us a day, we come in, then 'tis ours; but if we come not to the dole that day, and close with the offer, then 'tis lost to us: yesterday was, but is not now ours; and to morrow may be again, but not certain. Before we were born, we were not; a day we had not: And when we are dead, and the talent of lead seals up our grave, we have no more day for this work, see *Eccles. 9. 10.* So, *Joh. walk while you have the light*, that is, as the holy Ghost saith, *to day while it is day, if you will hear his voyce, barden not your hearts.* And Saint Paul preaching to the *Corinthians*, *2 Cor. 6. 1, 2.* beseecheth them, *that they receive not the grace of God in vain*, that is, that they put not off the offer, or delay the receiving, but presse them to close with the mercy; now, for

*Eccles. 9.
10.*

Heb. 3.

*2 Cor. 6.
1, 2.*

now

now is the accepted time, behold now
 is the day of salvation. And to this
 doth well agree that passage in
 Rom. 12. 11. and with the first and
 second verses of the same Chapter,
 Be not slothfull, but fervent in spirit,
ἡ ψυχὴ ἀσπασμένη; serving the Lord
 (as our Translation renders it); but
 Origen saith, that some copies have
 it, *ἡ ψυχὴ ἀσπασμένη*; serving the
 time, that is, taking the opportu-
 nity; misse not your day: there is
 a time when God may be found by
 sinners, and there is a day when
 God will not be found; *Isai 55. 6.*
Seek the Lord while he may be
found, call upon him while he is
near.

Though God in mercy strives
 with men in this life; yet he
 saith, *My Spirit shall not al-
 wayes strive with man*, Gen. 6. 3.
 no, not alwayes in this life; the day
 of grace may be lost, before thy life
 be lost; yea long before a man
 comes on his deathbed. There are
 some sort of sinners with whom the
 Lord will have no more to do in a

way of mercy; will move them no more; the means, nor any Sermon shall work upon them: it may be they have slighted and resisted so long, that now in judgement they are hardened, and given up as the Israelites, after forty yeares, so long was their day; and when they had provoked so long, it is said, *My people would not harken, my people would none of me, so I gave them up unto their hearts lusts*, and leaves them it with an *(oh)* *Oh that my people had hearkened to me, and then next we hear of, was, that God swore they should not enter into his rest*, Psal. 95. 11.

Psal. 81.
11, 12.

Heb. 12.
16, 17.

You have heard of *Esau*, whose surname (to this day is, The prophane, he had a fair opportunity for his fathers blessing, but either his little esteem of it, & neglect while it might have been gotten, or his presumption, that any time he might have had it; the blessing was lost to him, and totally lost; for afterwards when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; though

though he sought it (when too late) with tears.

There is a sad Instance of the case, though no person named, in *Prov. i. 13.* Turn you at my Reproof. behold, I will pour out my Spirit upon you, and this be it known unto you; Because I have called and ye have refused, I have stretched out my hands, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsell: I will also mock at your calamity, for then shall they call upon me, and I will not answer; they shall seek me, but shall not find me: and so they are served in their own kind.

The like to this for event, you have in the instance of the five foolish virgins; Carelesse they were, and waited not their opportunity, they lost their happinesse, they came too late, the dore was shut, they cryed for entrance, but none granted; Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor hour wherein the Son of man cometh; And so here in the Text, Jerusalem

Ma. 23.1

had a day, as fair an opportunity for their peace and mercy, as could be desired; but lost it, and with it their mercy, and their souls.

Note,

And the amount is this, that if men will consume their dayes in sinning, they shall lose their day of saving. It may be now at a Sermon, God is treating with thy soul, and he hath been formerly speaking to thee, this is not the first time, but who knoweth but this may be the last time; after so many past, God may hold his peace, and stay his hand, and withhold his grace, and you may hear an hundred Sermons more, yet never feel one touch of the Spirit more. Preachers may not be hid from your eyes, yet grace may be hid from thine heart.

Note.

And to be sure, if not till then, yet when this life is at an end, thou shalt live no more to hear, nor see this day; and alas, how many men are dead while they live, dead in sins, and dead, and stiffe, and cold to grace, and the intreaties of Christ.

Therefore

Therefore let every soul that prizeth his peace and salvation, take heed and lay to heart the offers of mercy in the day of Gods gracious visitation; look to it, Sirs, and trifle no longer: *To day if you will hear his voice, barden not your hearts.*

Now as all those hints and instances do bespeak your care and watchfulnesse, lest you should misse your opportunities; So in the next, you shall do well seriously to consider, for your imitation, while we instance in some recorded in Scripture, which took the season, obeyed in due time, and were successfull, and became happy in this, that in that their day they knew, and accepted the things that belonged to their peace.

And mark as you hear, How they took the first opportunity was offered them, though some came in later than others.

In the Parable of the labourers hired, *Matth. 20. 1. to 8.* Some were

2.

were called in the morning early, obeyed presently, and were entertained, they put not off, nor made excuse. (2.) Others, the third hour, and they likewise went and did what they were called unto, and delayed not. (3.) Others, the sixth hour and ninth, and they yielded as soon as called, and did not make excuse, nor demanded longer time. (4.) And some others that had loytered to the eleventh hour of the day, yet they refused not, but presently set themselves to their businesse; they said not, We will stay till to morrow, or some other time; and they were accepted also: but all this while you must note, that each of these took their first opportunity.

Mat. 25.

You have likewise to remember the good successe the five wise Virgins had, They were ready at the first approach of Christ, and went in with him to the marriage.

So the Prodigal; so farre as he went, and so idle as he had been; yet

yet as soon as he was touched, and had his eyes open, and came unto himself, to his wits again; he no sooner thinks of his Father's house and love, but leaves his swine and husks, and makes homeward, and he was met with joy, imbraces, pardon, and mercy.

And one instance more in this Chapter where the Text is, *Zacchaeus*, Oh how happy 'twas for him that Christ called him on a day, and that same day he answered, and accepted and was converted; for he made haste and received Christ joyfully into his heart as well as his house, and that was the happiest day he ever had seen; and Jesus said unto him, *This day is salvation come to this house*.

Thus you have this point demonstrated by Scripture, proof, and example; and by this you may perceive, that though God in mercy hath appointed poor sinners a certain time, as well as means for their conversion, and reconciliation, and some have been so happy and blessed,

Luke 19.
5, 6.

Verse 9.

bleſſed, as to take their opportunity, yet 'tis poſſible, and 'tis proved, that many have had their day for the like mercies, but have loſt it; for they did not lay to heart the things belonging to their peace in that their day, and afterward were hid from their eyes. This hath been the caſe of verie many, and ſtill is; Pray God no man here preſent, put off this day's intreaties again as formerly, leſt he hazard his peace and reconciliation again, and ſo loſe this day, and never live to ſee another, for the purpoſe of ſalvation for himſelf.

Queſt.

Queſt. If any man ask me when is this day? How ſhall I know it? which is mine, and which is thine, when is it gone and loſt?

Anſw.

Anſw. When and whereſoever Chriſt is preached, and the Goſpel is publiſhed, then and there to that people Chriſt is near, and grace is offered, and this hath been many yeares in England, and in London, and all this while, have been continued theſe glad tidings of

of peace and reconciliation to
soules : but when this shall be re-
moved out of this place, then it
will be hid from your eyes; Christ
is gone, grace is gone, light is gone,
darknesse comes, and the day is
lost, and God only knowes, how
long it will continue, or how
quicklie it will be removed out of
our sight.

Would to God men would not
deal unkindly with it and drive it
away, but repent and believe,
yield and obey, accept and love it,
that Christ and his Gospel of grace,
might stay with us.

Note.

*Quest. But secondly, If you would
know what time God hath set for
thy coming in, beyond which he will
not wait to be gracious any longer;
in which, if thou despisest the Call,
or refuseth the Offer, God will put a
bolt, and grace shall strive no more
with thee :*

2. Quest.

Answ. This no man knoweth,
whether this or the next be the
time, but surelie it must be before
the day of death; everie man must
be

Answ.

Ecclef. 9.
10.

be reconciled to God, ere he die, by faith in Christ, Repentance from dead works, and holy living, or else he shall never: *now or never*, while grace and the man live together in this present world, so long there is hope; but when grace is gone, and thou art driven hence to thy long home, thy day is lost, and the poor sinner irrecoverable.

Note.

You had best consider in time what hour of the day 'tis with you, what is the date of thy life, how many daies and years can each of you reckon; you can tell how long you have lived, and enjoied the means of grace; but can you tell how long you shall live in this world, or under the discipline of grace with a *win-able* heart? You can neither command time or grace, but you may in time accept the grace offered.

1. It may be, some that are here present this day before the Lord, can say with joy and thankfulness, They had their day, and knew it, the

the Angel moved and they stept in, their hearts were touched, and they yielded; the offer was made and they accepted, Christ was near and they embraced him, they stood not out, but closed with him; in the day of his power they were made willing, and now Christ is theirs, and they are Christs; they love him heartilie, and hate sin perfectlie, and live holilie: lift up your heads, pretious soules, and be thankful; you have not lost your day, you are happie now, and in a fair way to heaven, and if you continue in faith and love of Jesus, and grow in grace, you shall be for ever happie in glorie, when you have finished your course.

Psal. 110.3

It may be, some others are here standing, some young, some aged, with whom Gods Ministers have been treating, and Gods Spirit striving formerlie, and they have stood out untill now; Who knows but that they have bin reserved for such a time as this; now another prize is put into your hand, this may be

2.

be to them the acceptable time, a day of reconciliation and peace: a day you have now, which thousands who now lay under wrath and final despaire, would prize above Mountains of gold, and Rocks of Rubies, if they had once again such an opportunitie as this; it may be God hath determined, that hitherto to this day thou shalt come, and grace and mercie shall wait on thee now; but no farther. Christ may be passing on by thee now, and looks on thee, and gives a secret touch, and bids thee, Come away after him, and leave thy sins and follow him, and saith as to *Zachens*, *I will come to thy house and bring salvation this day.*

Note.

Oh if there be any such among you, who is touched at heart this minute, let him not quench the spirit, nor reject the motion; let him take this opportunitie, and make up the match (*now, even now*) in this place, ere he stirre hence, and then he may conclude, he hath not lost his day, but what-
ever

ever
now
man
man
if
con
I
with
no
mel
ther
who
wor
mife
wor
of
Rich
and
ted
thin
So
have
of
thof
once
again
ever
fin, a

ever he hath been before, yet now he may be a converted man, a pardoned man, an happy man, in this his day of visitation, if he lay it now to heart, and consider it.

It may be, there are others here, with whom there is no prevailing, no mercie moves them, no teares melts them, no intreaties winne them, no promises allure them; in whom the custome of sin hath worne off the sense of sinne and miserie, to whom nothing but the world, and pleasures, and sin, is of any account; to whom the Riches and treasures of grace. and glories of heaven are accounted poor and mean, and foolish things.

3.

Such there may be here now, who have had some impressions on them of good, but now worn out again; those, who, it may be, were once almost perswaded, but now again altogether as obstinate as ever; who can make a mock of sin, and scoffe of Religion: who

E

can

can laugh or sleep at a Sermon of life and death; and scorn reproof; and despise God to his face, and are growing worse and worse, filthie; and more filthie; and what may be thought of such? Have they lost their day.

Ans.

Alas, for such we know not what God will do with them yet, but those are sad notices of men given over: & this we say, Many daies they have lost, many mercies have they abused; many offers have they rejected; many motions have they quenched; much patience have they wronged: and trulie, if there be any day yet for them left (but the day which they cannot avoid, the day wherein God will judge the world, all obstinate impenitent sinners to eternal flames) they had best look to it, that they may take it when it comes: lest if that passe away too, and be hid from their eyes also, and they not converted in that day neither; then must they lie down in sorrow, saying, Oh that I had but known;

known! but now it is hid from
 ming eyes: I shall never see the
 day of salvation, for I would not
 know, nor lay to heart the day of
 visitation: oh sinners, think on this,
 and trie your tempers; and consi-
 der how long alreadie you have
 refused; will you not henceforth
 from this time crie unto the Lord,
 if peradventure he may yet be gra-
 cious to thee, if thou return af-
 ter thou hast done all these things,
even then turn, turn unto the Lord;
 even now, and put all out of doubt,
 close now with Christ, cast away
 your sins, and the question will be
 best resolved by your practice.

Note.

Jer. 9. 4.

So much toward resolving the
 quærie, as far as God hath given
 us any hints about particular times
 or seasons, of getting or losing a
 mans interest in peace and reconcil-
 iation by Christ offered in a day,
 During a mans life.

Now, I know, there are some
 would make a quick answer to
 to this demand, and enough to
 gratifie the humours of many loose

and vain persons, but not at all to
satisfie a sober soul that thinks of
another world. *Tush*, say they,
What trouble you your self about
these niceties, take your pleasure
now while you may, and take your
time of repentance at leisure; a
little time will do that work: do
you not remember? that, *At what
time soever*; And, the *Thief on
the Crosse*?

Answ.

Answ. Indeed here is a rare
Example, and a *short halfe-sen-
tence*, which men abuse to their
undoing.

I could answer this at large,
but this I onlie say now to you, that
have not debauch'd your Reason,
and lost Consideration.

I.

When any of you can dispatch
the whole dutie of man, the *All* of
Faith and Repentance, and new
Obedience, in a trice, and on your
death-bed, and can be assured
withall, that you shall have then
time enough, and grace enough,
and will enough, and strength
enough to perform all; then you
may

may deferre untill your dying day : but untill this be made sure to you, be not so foolish as to cast away your soules, upon such desperate attempts and impossibilities.

And for the Thief] when any of you, or any bodie else you know, can have the like opportunitie to die with such circumstances, to be put to death in the same place on the same day, with the Saviour of the world, our blessed Jesus, and to be the happie instance of a great miracle; then, and not untill all these things be hoped for, let no man think, that (though it may be many a mans case to die as great a Malefactor as he was) yet that any bodie in the world should imagine, that one single instance should justify his presumption, when 'twas never intended, for to give any hopes to any rebellious sinner; seeing he was the *first* and the *last* of that kind; And surelie it is a desperate gamester that doth venture all he is

2.

worth, in this and another world;
at one cast of dice; and that, lesse
then Amsace: Shew me another
like this, or else hold thy peace,
and leave off arguing the case,
lest you make it desperate. How
much more safe is it, as well as
Rational, to do that while we
may, and have opportunitie, than
to put it off, (to) while we cannot
perform what of absolute neces-
sitie is to be done, or the poor
soul is lost for ever.

Having bin so large in the do-
ctrines, I need be the shorter in the
Application, which comes now in
the close: to perswade the pra-
ctice of *laying to heare* the things
of our peace, while it is to day;
that in this our day we may know
the things belonging to our peace,
while we may, shortly: Else they
will be hid from our eyes, and
then we may not.

Application.

I shall reduce all I have to say
now to you, about these two
points

points (you have heard raised from the Text) to these two Heads, to trie what may be done with you, in behalf of your own precious soules this day;

which I would } 1. Conviction, &
 dispatch in an } Admonition.
 an Essay of } 2. Counsell, &
 Perswasion.

And first of all, I would (if I could) shame the Follie, and reprove the Madnesse of men, such as neglect their salvation, by not timelie laying to heart, and slighting the Offer: and such as throw away their souls by resisting grace, and continuance in their sinne; would I could this day convince them of the greatnesse of their sin; and néarnesse of their danger, and dreadfulnessse of their destruction, who have to this day stood out wilfullie against the intreaties of Christ, and still resolve to do as they have done.

Why sinners! be it known unto you, that this is the Great condemnation, this is greater then all your

sins (Jo. 3. 19.) *that light is come into the world, and men love darknesse rather then light,* (that is) men refuse and reject Christ and Grace, and love their sins better; they may be saved, but they care not; they chuse those wayes which wil bring them to destruction. Who are to be blamed, if such as they are not to be blamed? and are there none such here? what! throw away your remedie.

Alas! that Christ who should be the Desire of all nations, should come with tears in his eyes, and love in his heart, and salvation in his hand, to sinners who are the shame of all nations? and yet be put off and rejected? He who is everie way lovely, doth sue to thee sinner, who art everie way ugly and loathsome. Would he wedd thy soul; and wilt not thou be married to him? alas for thee! how wilt thou escape the forest damnation; if thou neglect so great salvation. Wilt thou not lay down a lust, a sin for his sake, who
laid

laid down his life for thy sake?
alas! alas!

Why sinner, what hell doth that
soul deserve, that doth despise
heaven? and what miserie doth
he choose, that wilfully refu-
serh mercie; wo unto thee *Beth-
saida*, wo unto thee *Corazin*, wo
unto thee *London*, for mightie
works have been done in you,
and powerfull preaching hath
been among you; and if after all,
you will still remain impregnable,
impenitent and unbelieving: it
shall be easier for *Sodom*, then for
this City. Mark that, *Luk. 10. 12, 13.*

With what face can sinners cry
out upon the cursed Jewes, that
rejected their Saviour, and put
him to death, and yet do the same
things themselves? they chose a
Barrabbas, and refused Christ: but
what better art thou, that choosest
a lust to keep it alive, and refuselt
Christ, that would save thy live:
'Tis possible at a distance, men will
be Christians, that they will; and
hear and speak of grace and hea-
ven

ven very complyingly; but alas, when it comes to it, the time and the offer, then no such matter: How doe sinners draw back? then what excuses do they make, and what delays do they use, The time is not yet come, or a Farm, or Merchandise, a trifle, or a folly comes in between the Heart and Christ, that they cannot close; and very often it is in down-right terms, we will not have Him to Reigne over us. Is this the way to peace and reconciliation? will this end well at last, friends?

Alas, (Sirs) what cares Christ for your fair words, if your actions be foul? How little doth he esteem a complement, a cringe, and a nod, if your hearts bow not to his Scepter? will it serve our turn that we cry *Hosanna* to day in our professions, and crucifie him to morrow in our practises? what is it the nearer, if we say we will from day to day, give up our hearts and lives to Christ, and yet do not what we promise, but keep our hearts upon

upon the world, and sin every day: well Sirs, there is no dallying with Christ and grace, God is serious, and ye must be serious too, or else you do but mock God, and destroy your own souls: what do you do with the naming of Christ, if you depart not from iniquity? what do you do with the outside, and form of godlinesse, if you deny the power of godlinesse?

Is it not enough, that you have refused so long, will you still refuse; when will you return, if you will not now return, when will you be reconciled to God; if this day you refuse, when will you in good earnest close with Christ and make an end of sinning, by Repentance and new obedience; if not now? Is it not enough yet, you have provoked God, and abused his long-sufferance: when will it be enough then? hath not Christ waited long enough for thee Sinner, but thou wilt put him to wait longer: why? Christ can be without thee, but how canst thou be without Him:

Him : if thou be lost, Christ will be Christ still; but if Christ be lost to thee, thou art lost and undone for ever.

Hath not Christ done his part, and the Gospel its part, and Preachers their part, by intreaties, reproofes, instructions, counsels, prayers, and tears, but when will you do your parts; namely to yield and obey, to come in and submit to the Lord Jesus, for grace and salvation; O when will it once be? when will it once be?

Oh sinners will you runne on, and not look back, how farre have you gone from your God? and will you not yet consider how near you are to the last day? will you quite forsake him, and never return? to whom will you goe then for eternal life?

Go thy way then proud Prodigal to the Swine, and to the husks, wallow there and die; if that be better then thy Fathers house. Ah sinner! stay, and consider what thou leavest; look upon Christ,

Christ, see how he wooes thee : see
 how near he drawes to thee, see
 how he bemoanes thee , see how
 grace, reconciliation, and salvari-
 on courts thee; canst thou find
 in thy heart to let him go away
 from thy soul, and canst thou not
 find in thy heart to close with him
 this day, and that he may leave
 a blessing behind him : will no-
 thing prevaile with thee ? shall
 Christ intreat ? and shall We in-
 treat ? and shall the sinner remain
 still as he was ? oh ! can any Heart
 stand out against Christ, but an
 heart of Adamant ? can any Bow-
 els not yearn, when Christ's bowels
 yearn, but bowels of brasse ? O
 would to God it might be, that
 some poor wearied sinner among
 you, would come and lay down his
 burden at Christs feet, and change
 Masters ; the worst for the best,
 sin and Satan for Christ and grace;
 oh that some one of you (among
 so many) that have gone so farre,
 and stood out so long, would
 stop here, and stand out no longer;
 what

what an happy day would this day prove to thee poor soul, if it may prove a day of thy peace, and reconciliation, a day of thy translation from the regions of sin and death, and Consecration to the service of Christ; A day of thy new birth; O how much better would this day be then the day of thy first birth; or if were a day of advancement to all earthly honours and dignity? oh sinner wilt thou not yet yield?

Oh that in this thy day thou wouldst lay this to heart.

Use II. of Counsell and Perswasion.

Exhortation.
Must I part with you so without an earnest exhortation? I cannot, I may not; why may I not hope to prevaile with some one or other in this Numerous Congregation this day: it may be I shall never see your faces more in this place; and 'tis oddes to lay, all you that now

are

are here, may not live to see another such day all together again; the thred may be cut, the life spilt as water on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again; many of us may be ere to morrow in another world.

How doth it concern us all, this day to lay some foundation, on which we may build our hopes of happinesse in the other world?

Give me leave to try in the name of Christ, what I can do to perswade you that I may leave something with you; that you may remember hereafter, that a poor Minister of Christ did beseech you in his name, that you would know, and lay to heart, *the things be- longing to your peace, in this your day.*

O would to God I might prevail with you for your own good.

I exhort you, I beseech you, *I conjure you in the name of God,* and if I had tears at command, I would intreat you weeping; this

That you, every one of you, this day,

day, would let all your sins goe, but let not Christ go, let not grace go, let not this day passe away without your hearty and reall closing with Christ; as ever you look for any good in and by Christ; give him leave to banish your sins, and to bear rule in your hearts and lives: He must be thy Lord, or else he will never be thy Saviour.

Note.

Improve this hour of visitation and be happy, throw away that with loathing and indignation, which hath kept thee so long from being fully perswaded *to be altogether a Christian*, and be happy; and if any of you feel the door of your hearts now opening to Christ, lift them open wide, *that the King of Glory may come in*, that he may have full possession; let him rule and raigh there, and thou wilt be an happy man.

Psal. 34.
7, 8.

These three things I would counsell you to performe within your hearts, and resolutions ere you stirre hence.

1.

To make an end of all your sins
this

this day ere you sleep, in an unfeigned repentance, and God will speak peace to thee.

2. To make up that happy match between Christ and thy soul, by receiving Christ by Faith, and resigning up thy self to Christ by hear-consent, love, and obedience: Christ is ready now, if thou be ready now; oh do not give him the denial now he is so near thee; and canst thou do any thing better than this? than to match with Christ; will any thing in the world be of such concernment to thee as this?

3. To Resolve this day upon a godly life, to make Religion thy chiefest care and businesse; and if you find it now in your hearts to perform these three acts, you may be sure your day is not lost.

Oh Sirs, do this now, as you tender your life and eternal happinesse; do not put Christ off again with any excuse or denial, but take your opportunity this hour of vi-

F sitation,

sitation, and blesse God that you have it.

Is there never a poor lost sheepe here will be fetcht home to the Lord this day? shall not this days light bring home one Prodigal? will you all go away, and not any bodies soul be brought nearer to Christ, nor one jot the more resolved then before? Why then the Sermon is lost, and the day is lost, and God knowes whether we shall see another Sabbath, or hear another Sermon with any profit, to any purpose of good to our souls.

Oh that you, who have not hitherto been at all perswaded, would now you were almost resolved; and you, who are almost resolved, would to God you were altogether perswaded, to become the Lords.

- I. 1. You young ones, May one prevaile with you; you are tender yet, will you remember your Creatour? *Eccles. 12. 1.*

2. You

2. You men of age and strength, have you yet considered your greater Concernment? may you not be perswaded? You are or should be wise, and hearken to counsel; you have reason: Will you go away without yielding to be happy, by embracing of Christ, and devoting your selves to be truly Religious.

2.

3. You old men, What say you to Christ now? is it time for you to lay to heart the things of your peace, and to look to your interest in Christ? you have but little time before you, surely you had best to make all sure and fast this day; look to your Evidence, for you have but a very little time to live ere your Sun be set; oh that among these hundreds here this day, some one or other at least would be wonne to Christ; that it might not be said, Not one would yield to Christ, nor close with him this day, of so many: that it may never be said, those marbles and

3.

your hearts are of one make and temper.

How gladly would a servant that invites for Christ, hear of (though but) one whose heart is opening, and yielding to Christ, that were but *about* to repent and believe, how would he follow him with intreaties, untill the match were fully made and concluded, 'twixt Christ and his soul.

But I shall leave all with you, that I have to perswade withall, in these six Considerations: for Conclusion.

I. Consider, What if you saw our blessed Lord Jesus drawing near you in mercy, beholding, and weeping over you? would you leave him? would you slight him? no, you would not? Why then, do not now.

2. Consider, Can you do better then close with Christ this day, or if you will not now, when

when do you intend? Oh surely you will do worse, if you do not this; and if you do this now, you cannot do better.

3. Consider, Is it fit you should wait and begge, and cry henceforth after Christ, or that He should after you? Who will be the losers? who will have the worst of it. If you lose grace and salvation, how will you get this again, or such another?

4. Consider, Are the things belonging to your peace worth the looking after, or not? *Alas, what will you do when you are undone?*

5. Consider; what if you were certainly perswaded, that the next time you slighted grace intreating, and closed with sinne tempting, that God would withdraw his mercy, and clap damnation on thee? and never look on thee more for good? would

you then flight, what now is offered?

6.

6. Consider, if this were the last day you had to live, the last Sermon you had to heare, and shortly to go to the other world? would you put off the mercies of this day? How can you tell, but that to morrow, or very shortly you must be sent for to the other world, arrested by death, that spares no body?

Why then, pretious soules, be perswaded now once for all, to lay to heart this day the things that belong to your peace, before they be hid from your eyes; The Lord set it home, that you may be wise and happie. *Oh what will it profit you, to gain the whole world, and lose your own souls?*

FINIS.

